

## THE NEW ISLAND REPUBLIC OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

All About the Fijis and the Tongas, Which Are Now to be  
Joined to New Zealand.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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Wellington, New Zealand.—Before I begin my letters on the continent of Australia I want to tell you something about the scheme which is now proposed to federate New Zealand with the Tonga and Fiji islands, making a great colonial republic down here below the equator under the protection of England. This republic will embrace hundreds of islands. It will extend almost two thousand miles from north to south and it may be the beginning of an island empire which will include the greater part of the South seas. The governments of the various islands are now in correspondence. The leading politicians of New Zealand are pushing the scheme, and its adoption is being discussed in the New Zealand parliament. Premier Seddon is in favor of it and the arrangement may be consummated within the year.

The United States is especially interested in the future of some of the islands. The Tongas are not far south of Samoa and the Fijis have recently formed a direct connection with San Francisco by the new line of steamships which the Spreckles have put on connecting Suva and Levuka, the chief cities of those islands, by way of Hawaii, with San Francisco. There is also a connection between the Samoan islands and the Fijis, and the probability is that the greater part of the trade will fall into our hands.

table he ordered his men to ambush the watermen and to lay in a stock of fishbones and straws which had been gone down to bath.

King Thakombau killed his first victim when he was six years old, and he was famous as a cannibal up until the time of his conversion by the missionaries. He then reformed, and later on made the treaty which gave these islands to England.

These stories give you some idea of the Fijians of the past. The Fijians of today are perhaps the most civilized of the colored people south of the equator. They have been almost universally converted to Christianity. They have churches everywhere. They have almost a thousand places of worship; there are thirty thousand church members among the one hundred and twenty-one thousand of the population, and there are thirty-three thousand children in the Sunday schools. They have their own native preachers and they pay the salaries, giving about \$15,000 a year to the church. There are a half dozen denominations, among which the Methodists, the Presbyterians, the Episcopalians and the Catholics are the leading ones.

The Fijians have good schools. They were first established by the missionaries and afterwards taken up by the government. There are now 2,400 scholars in the public schools. There is a night school in the town of Levuka and another at Suva. There is an industrial school near the latter place where carpentering, boat building and iron working are taught. There are seventy students in the school, who have been entered for terms of five years. There is also a medical school, and altogether

wind is blowing right before you can see them.

Fiji Houses and Towns.

There are a number of Fiji villages scattered over the islands, and there are many natives who live in and about Suva and Levuka, the principal places where the foreigners are located. The Fiji villages are made almost entirely of thatched huts, the walls made of woven bamboo. The roofs are very thick and the thatch is so beautifully put on that it seems to be woven. No nails are used in building, the walls being tied together with strings. Some of the houses are conical in shape, others oblong and others oval. The usual hut has but one room, in which the whole family stays in the daytime, when it rains, and where all sleep at night. The usual bed is a mat on the floor and the pillow a bamboo log, which is placed under the neck in order to keep the sleeper's head from being up from the ground. There is but little cooking and fruit forms a large part of the diet of the people.

In the mountains there are savage Fijians who keep themselves apart from the civilized natives. Here the men for full dress wear a strip of bark about their waists tied at the front in a bow, while the women have a fringe of grass about four inches long. Both sexes take a great deal of pride in their head dresses, and you frequently see one with a long pin thrust through his hair as a scratcher. This weapon is to make war upon certain unmentionable insects which almost every head is infested. Sometimes the irritation gets beyond the scratching point, however, and in desperation the man so attacked kindles a fire of banana leaves and lying down upon his wooden pillow

stitute, a bank and many respectable buildings.

HOW THE FIJIS ARE GOVERNED.

I have spoken of the governor of the Fijis. His name is Sir G. T. M. O'Brien. He is appointed by the king of England, and he has a salary of \$12,500 a year, or just about that of our minister to Peking. He has a sort of cabinet or executive council, and the laws of the country are made by a legislative council, of which he is president. There are a large number of salaried chiefs and native magistrates. In ordinary matters the native laws are preserved as far as possible, but in five of the provinces there are European officers as resident commissioners to assist the chiefs. The colony is on a good paying basis. It has about a million dollars debt, but it is reducing this every year, and at present its revenues are considerably greater than its expenditures. About half the receipts come from the customs and the remainder from other taxation.

SUGAR AND COCONUTS.

There is a great deal of money made in the Fijis out of sugar plantations and coconut groves. The climate and soil are not far different from parts of the Philippines. The sugar lands are rich, and upon the higher portions of the country, coffee is now being grown, yielding about five hundred pounds to the acre. A large number of tea gardens have recently been set out. The average tea yield is already four hundred pounds per acre, and when the trees are a little older it is said this will be increased to six hundred pounds per acre.

One of the best businesses outside the sugar is coconut trees. Each tree yields about a hundred nuts per annum and brings in about a dollar per year net. At this rate a grove of ten thousand trees will bring in ten thousand dollars a year, and as the trees are set close together the ten thousand do not represent a very large area. After the trees are once planted, little needs to be done until they are in bearing, which comes at about the same time as the average apple tree. The same conditions prevail in the Philippines, and I expect to see many Americans making fortunes out of coconuts there. The nuts are broken open and the meat is cut up and dried, when it is called copra, and is then ready for shipment abroad for use in making soaps, hair restorers and other such things.

DO WE WANT HINDOOS?

Nearly all the profitable enterprises in the Fijis are owned or backed by Englishmen. The chief question which confronts them is that of labor. The Fijis themselves do not supply the demand, and of late they have been importing laborers from the Solomon islands, the New Hebrides and the Gilberts. They have also imported a number of Hindoos, who make better workmen than any of the others.

WORK FOR 25 CENTS A DAY.

As to the Hindoos, they are returned at the expense of the colony. It costs more to employ them, but they are usually engaged for terms of five years, on the understanding that they will have food free for six months after their arrival, and free lodgings and medical care for the whole term. Their wages are paid weekly. Each man gets twenty-five cents a day and each woman eighteen cents. Up to 1898 more than fifteen thousand East Indians had been imported upon these conditions, and of these, twelve thousand had remained in the colony. Many had settled on government lands at the close of their service, and some had little plantations of rice, sugar and bananas of their own. The Hindoos could be brought to the Philippines and much more cheaply than to the Fijis, and it is a question whether they would not be a valuable addition to our working population there.

IN THE TONGA ISLANDS.

Another part of this federation is to be the Tongas. These are a group of islands lying northwest of New Zealand and southeast of the Fijis. They are now under a British protectorate, although they still have a king, George II, who governs the country in connection with the legislative assembly. The government in fact is a sort of constitutional monarchy under English rule. Half of the assembly is composed of the nobles, and the other half is made up of representatives elected by such of the natives as have paid their taxes. The nobles can only hold office during good behavior and the taxation clause makes only the best of the natives eligible to the assembly.

These Tonga islands have an area altogether about one-tenth that of Connecticut. The largest of them is only twenty-two miles long, and here are many which are little more than atolls and coral rocks rising out of the sea. Some of them are volcanic, but their

soil is well fitted for coconuts and sugar.

As to population, the Tongans are only about 18,000 in number. They are Polynesians, having complexions of a light copper color and features not much unlike our Filipinos. They are all Christians, and as a general thing, are religious. They have but one town, of good size, Nukualofa, the capital. This is situated on the largest island, running about a beautiful harbor. It is a very pretty little place with wide streets and nice houses shaded by coconut and other tropical trees. The finest buildings are the palace of the king and the Methodist college for girls. The town has a cricket club and a race track, and there are on the island, it is said, some of the finest carriage roads south of the equator.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

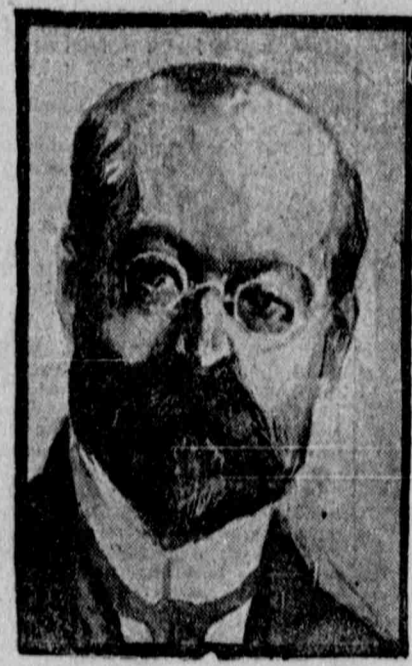
INDIANS IN WHISPERING GALLERY

Very picturesque were the two Yakima Indians who visited the capitol yesterday. In true Indian fashion, states the Tacoma (Wash.) Daily Ledger, they marched in single file, each brave putting his foot directly where his comrade had stepped, just as Indians do in the dime novels and on the plains.

The most conspicuous thing about the Indians was the enormous, high-crowned, wide-brimmed hat of undressed skin that each man wore. It was as noticeable as a mountain peak towering abruptly from the plain. Underside his hat, each Indian wore his feet four feet long. A braid fell over each shoulder and down to the waist, where it was caught up and tied with deer skin. The dress of the Indians was a unique mixture between civilized garb and savage costume, jackets being noticeable. One of the ears.

The man who had the red man's charge took them to the whispering gallery. The Indians paid into the gallery the mysterious whispering. They found the mysterious whispering too unaccountable and weird to be endured. "They think that a spirit is concealed here," explained their conductor, as he hurried his trembling charges away.

BIG RICE MURDER CASE THRILLS COUNTRY.



The trial of Albert T. Patrick of New York, for the murder of his aged millionaire client, Wm. Marsh Rice, will prove one of the most interesting cases in the annals of crime. Patrick is accused of poisoning the old miser by Chas. F. Jones, the ex-valet of Rice, who, himself, confesses to complicity in the foul deed. The object of the alleged crime was to secure Rice's millions. Above are shown the principals.

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(An increase of 579,988.)			
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(An increase of 724,965.)			
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(An increase of 966,647.)			
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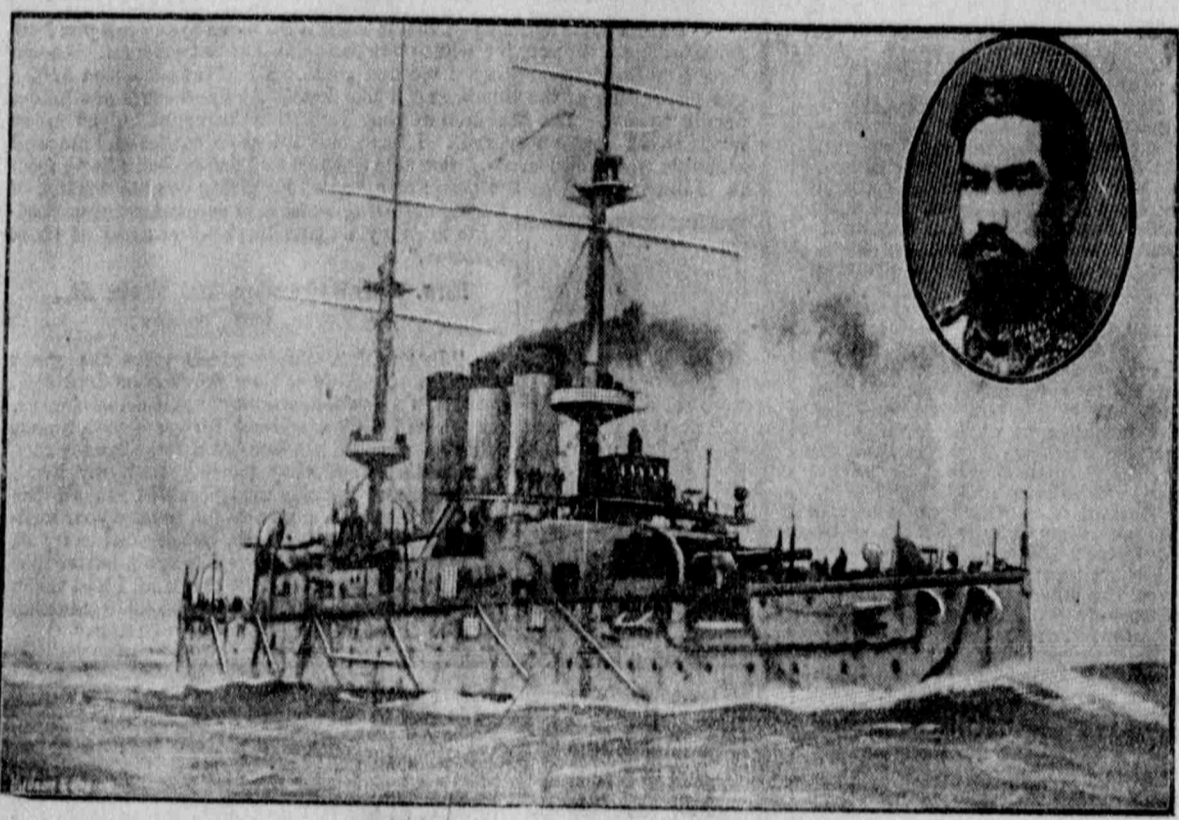
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JAPAN SAYS SHE IS SATISFIED, BUT—



Japanese Battleship Shikishima, 14,350 tons.

Despite the declaration of Japan that she is satisfied with Russia's assurance regarding Manchuria, the Mikado is losing no time in strengthening his naval and military position in case of a sudden rupture. It is generally believed that a struggle between the two powers sooner or later is bound to come and no time could be more favorable to Japan than the present, when her strength in Asiatic waters is superior to that of Russia's.

AMERICAN TRADE WITH THE FIJIS.

At the present time the Fiji islands alone are annually importing about \$3,500,000 worth of goods, and a large part of this already comes from the United States. We are supplying them with timber. They buy our coal oil, and our hardware brings the highest price in their markets. The American ax is the only kind a Fijian will use. He likes it because it is light, sharp and well tempered, and he will buy it every time in preference to a German or an English ax. He likes American knives with blades about fifteen inches long to clear his fields and gather his bananas and coconuts, and he is also fond of our cheap watches and clocks. I am told a good business can be created there in knocked-down furniture and also in low-priced pianos and organs. The people buy about \$200,000 worth of cottons yearly and there is a demand for canned meats and flour. Our merchants can learn all about the markets by writing to the chambers of commerce at Levuka and Suva, where they will find banks at both places.

IN CANNIBAL DAYS.

Our drummers can be accommodated at good hotels at either of these towns, and they need not fear the meat brought on the table, for cannibalism passed away long before the English got possession of the Fijis. Indeed, the Fiji islands are now more advanced than parts of the Philippines, and their condition shows what a nation like ours can do with its colony at Tutuila in Samoa and with the wilder parts of the Philippines. There are men and women here in New Zealand who can tell you stories of the days when the Fijians were the bloodthirstiest cannibals on earth. They had human sacrifices, and widows were expected to burn themselves on the funeral pyres of their husbands. When a chief built a house, he festively planted a living victim under each post, and when his canoes were launched he used living men as rollers on which to slide them down into the sea. When he died his wives were strangled to line his grave, that he might lie soft, and such a thing as killing a baby was too common for notice.

KING THAKOMBALU AND HIS FATHER.

The last king of the Fijis, Thakombau, was the son of a noted man eater. Thakombau was something of a cannibal himself, but his father craved human flesh as a mother craves candy. He had war canoes which he sent about through the South Sea Islands for supplies, and they often came back filled with dead men and women, and with dead babies dangling from the yardarms. Upon their return there was always a feast, in which everyone joined.

the people are well equipped as to educational matters.

THE NEWSPAPERS OF THE FIJIS.

It seems strange to think of newspapers being published in such an out of the way part of the world. There are, however, four different journals set up and printed in the islands. The Fiji Times is issued twice a week, and it costs twelve cents a number. The Royal Gazette appears five times a month at twenty-five cents a copy, while the Na Mata, a Fijian newspaper, is published by the government at seventy-five cents a year, or six cents a copy. In addition to these there is the Fiji Colonist, published in Levuka at \$5 per year.

WHAT THE FIJIS ARE.

But before I go further let me give you some idea of the extent of the islands. You know that they lie south of the equator and a little to the west of our possessions in Samoa, but you may not know that they are scattered hundred miles and that they constitute altogether more than two hundred different islands and islets. They were discovered in 1643 by the Dutch navigator, Tasman, the same man who discovered Tasmania, and they became a British colony in 1874. Altogether their area is a little less than that of Massachusetts and their total population about that of Omaha.

They are growing less in number every year. There were 50,000 more forty years ago than there are now, a fact which suggests that modern civilization may mean death to the savages of the South seas. The same falling off has occurred in the Hawaiian islands, as well as in other places where the foreigners have introduced new diseases along with other evils which we have but which they had not. Take the measles for instance. This disease was unknown until it was brought in by the Europeans, but when it came it took off 40,000 people the first year, and it has killed many since.

HOW THE FIJIAN LOOK.

And still the Fijians are as strong and as good looking as the foreigners. They are among the finest of the Melanesians, and are far superior to our American Indians. They have dark copper skins, frizzly hair, which stands up about their heads in an enormous mop, making them look very tall. They plaster their hair with damped lime in order to have it stand straight, and this in connection with the sun bleaches it to an ashy and makes it look very curious.

The men are tall and well formed. The women, when young, are fine looking, having handsome eyes and well-moulded faces. In the settled regions the women wear loose cotton gowns, but back in the interior the usual attire is a breech cloth and a string of beads and a fan. The men wear little more.

on the side toward which the wind blows thus smokes out the surplus.

THE CITIES OF THE FIJIS.

There is a close connection between New Zealand and the Fijis. You can get boats here every few weeks for the two chief ports, Suva and Levuka, and the excursion there is one of the favorite ones of this part of the world. It is looked upon here much as a trip up the Great Lakes is looked upon in the United States. I have met a number of men who have been to the islands, and they tell me that they are the paradise of the Pacific. They describe Suva, the capital, as being especially beautiful. It has many nice foreign houses, and about a thousand Europeans as well as a large number of natives. Its chief street, the Victoria Parade, is paved with soapstone. It is lined with shade trees and is almost a mile long. The town has four hotels, a public library, a mechanics' institute and Presbyterian, Episcopal and Catholic churches.

It is at Suva that the governor has his offices. He is, of course, an Englishman, and he lives like a little king in a place which cost about a hundred thousand dollars. Suva has a custom house, a postoffice, a hospital and a lunatic asylum.

Levuka, the former capital, is some distance away on the island of Ovalau, which is a much smaller island than Viti Levu, where Suva is situated. Levuka is surrounded by hills. It lies upon a beautiful harbor covering an area of about forty acres. It has a hospital, a cathedral, a mechanics' in-

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